



Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

NEWS RELEASE

*Working towards healthy, self-sustaining populations for all Atlantic coast fish species, or successful restoration
well in progress by the year 2015*

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Scup Board Increases TAL to 11.18 Million Pounds for 2009 Fishery

Alexandria, VA – The Commission’s Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass Management Board approved an increase to the 2009 scup total allowable landings limit from 7.34 million pounds to 11.18 million pounds, with the commercial quota revised to 8.4 million pounds and the recreational harvest limit revised to 2.6 million pounds (after the research set aside was deducted). This increase is consistent with that taken by the National Marine Fisheries Service for federal waters.

The Board’s action is based on the results of a recent review of the scup stock assessment which indicates that the scup resource is rebuilt (population estimated to be 130% of its target biomass) and overfishing is not occurring. The newly estimated allowable harvest, or maximum sustainable yield (MSY), is also significantly higher than previously estimated and represents a potential for greater harvest levels in the future.

While the Northeast Fisheries Science Center’s Data Poor Workshop, which conducted the review of the scup assessment, found the new long-term estimate of maximum MSY to be reasonable given the historical evidence from the fishery, it recommended that managers consider a cautious approach in setting quotas. The peer review panel advised that “rapid increases in quota to meet the revised MSY would be unwarranted given uncertainties in recruitment. A more gradual increase in quotas is the preferred approach given the uncertainty in the model estimates and stock status”.

Given this advice, the states chose to maintain their recreational management measures for the 2009 fishery. For specific state measures, please contact your state marine fishery agency.

For more information, please contact Toni Kerns, Senior Fishery Management Plan Coordinator for Management, at (202) 289-6400 or tkerns@asmfc.org.

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The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission was formed by the 15 Atlantic coastal states in 1942 for the promotion and protection of coastal fishery resources. The Commission serves as a deliberative body of the Atlantic coastal states, coordinating the conservation and management of nearshore fishery resources, including marine, shell and anadromous species.

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